

February 2, 2010  
Milton, Florida

The Marine Advisory Committee met on the above date with the following members present: Chairman Jeff Marker and members Rick Harris and Dan Wakley. John Griffing and Pasco Gibson were absent. Also present were the County Administrator (Hunter Walker), Public Works Director (Avis Whitfield), County Engineer (Roger Blaylock) and Marine Extension Agent (Chris Verlinde). Chairman Marker called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m.

The minutes of the November 3, 2009 meeting were approved.

#### MARINE SANCTUARY UPDATE

Mandie Evers, of the Navarre Beach Marine Sanctuary Committee introduced herself and Nancy Sandler as Co-Chairs of the committee. She stated that Mark Griffith has stepped down as Chair but is still active with the committee. She gave an overview of the progress the committee has made on their applications for permits stating that the DEP permits have been approved and they are waiting for Wetlands Science, Inc. to respond on the first round of comments for the Army Corp of Engineers permit. Another survey is needed of the Gulf side site and the Committee does have the money available for the survey. They are hoping they will be able to use some of the studies on local environment done by Escambia County during their permit process. Their committee has just over \$5,000 in their account at this time most of which they earned from their Run for the Reef event. They have applied for a \$5,000 grant from International Paper and should know if they will be awarded the grant by April. They will apply for the Impact 100 grant and hope to partner with the Science Station in order to make the education portion of the reefs stronger and to get their assistance with the grant evaluation and strengthen the grant package. They are looking for U.S. Fish and Wildlife grants and planning the Run for the Reef event again this year, as well as starting a sponsorship program. The Committee would like the MAC to support their grant applications by reviewing or assisting with writing grants.

The MAC discussed the length of the permit process and advised that it may be premature to expect to be able to meet the grant requirements for this cycle.

#### DERELICT VESSEL UPDATE

Avis Whitfield reported that he is working with a marine contractor to get a proposal for the Sypmhomia and the derelict sailboat but noted the contractor has been busy and the tides have not been right for what they need to do. He confirmed that the contractor is interested and does plan to submit a proposal for both derelict boats and has already committed to removing the sailboat.

#### FLORIDA BOATING IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (FBIP) GRANT CYCLE

Mr. Walker said that this item is on the agenda to remind the MAC that this grant is somewhat different and can be used for boat ramps, lifts, markings, piers, docks and derelict vessel removal. The new criteria have come out and are listed online. The County's grant coordinator has reviewed the application and noted one difference in the FBIP criteria for this year is the requirement to have all permits before applying. None of the eligibility requirements changed. Mr. Wakely noted that it seems the point system or ranking scale has been changed to favor larger counties with more boats.

Mr. Marker asked what projects fall under that criteria. Mr. Walker replied that we do not have any specific projects at this time. Mr. Whitfield said there are a lot of needs in both the north and south ends but specifics are not available at this time. Mr. Harris asked if the proposed property acquisition in Holley could come under this grant, possibly for parking lot improvements. Mr. Walker noted that staff is working on that issue and Mr. Marker noted that Commissioner Goodin is also working on it but it may not be ready for this grant cycle. Mr. Harris asked if Sandy Landing ramp is in trouble. Mr. Whitfield explained that Sandy Landing is on a bend in the river and the river is changing as a part of its natural progression and has been very detrimental to that boat ramp. He noted that the land belongs to International Paper and is leased by Santa Rosa County and it would not be wise to make major improvements to property that we do not own. The paper company would be willing to sell it but only in 80 acre increments. Other sites on the Escambia River are being reviewed for a new boat launch. No specifics are available. He also noted that Sandy Landing closes for about six weeks during hunting season.

Mr. Marker concluded that there are no projects for this grant cycle. Mr. Walker said we have until March and if anything comes up it can be discussed at the next MAC meeting. Mr. Marker asked if the Blackwater Pirate project is still ongoing. Mr. Walker said the cost of the signs would not be worth going through the grant process and vessel registration funds can be used for that project. Mr. Wakley said this grant (FBIP) is divided into different levels and you get more points for asking for less money by matching with in kind services such as labor, administrative services or engineering. He suggested staff contact the cities to see if there are projects that can be applied for on their behalf. Mr. Harris asked if derelict vessels are a part of that grant. Mr. Walker said it is listed on their cover page and Mr. Wakley suggested we get clarification. Mr. Walker said we can use registration fees as match money which would allow us to ask for a larger amount. He also noted that we should get the permit for the derelict vessel removal first and then apply for funding. Mr. Blaylock mentioned that a land demolition permit would be easier to obtain than a water demolition permit. Mr. Marker agreed that we need to get the permits and then apply for any available grants. Mr. Whitfield asked if it is time to get an RFP. Mr. Walker said he hated to make firms go through the process if the price is going to be too high. He recommended that we start the permit process first. Mr. Harris mentioned that the permit process could be part of the proposal. Mr. Walker said that would actually be the basis for the proposal and Mr. Whitfield said that the proposal would determine what type of permit we need based on water or land demolition. Mr. Blaylock said we could take worst case scenario and put alternatives into the grant request over the water and then with approval of the adjacent property owner move it to dry land. Mr. Walker said that if bringing it out the water to dismantle will be less costly then it may become more doable. Mr. Wakley mentioned that bringing it out of the water and dismantling and then selling it for scrap metal may make it more attractive. Mr. Whitfield said there are problems with that because of reporting requirements but Mr. Blaylock noted that the issue can be made a part of the RFP requirements. Mr. Walker said once we develop the permit we will be a lot smarter and will know how we want to go with this. He also noted that we will not be able to make this grant cycle for this project.

#### CHAIRMAN / MEMBER ISSUES / REPORTS

No issues.

## STAFF UPDATES

Mr. Blaylock said we have received the Mulatt Dredge and Fill permit from the Army Corp of Engineers and FDEP with National Marine Fisheries comments and it has been incorporated into the plans and specifications which currently reside with the FWC who is actually funding this grant. They are reviewing our plans and specs to make sure that we meet the provisions of the grant and are doing everything that they want done before they cut the money. When we receive clearance we will go to bid. It is anticipated within the next 30 days. It may be on the street in about 60 days. Once it goes to bid the time frame written into the current plans and specs is 120 days.

Mr. Blaylock also noted that the Commissioners have selected a management firm for the Navarre Beach Fishing Pier and is currently negotiating a Management Agreement where the firm will collect the fees and operate the Navarre Beach Fishing Pier in exchange for the concessions from the pier store and the concessions within the pier building. Santa Rosa will receive the entire gate from the admissions onto the fishing pier. Also, the Board has approved the application for extending the fishing pier by another 45 feet which has been submitted to the FDEP and the Corp of Engineers. The Corp said they would not need to send the application to the National Marine Fisheries which should help expedite that process and we should receive a reply shortly but it will require a recalculation of the Submerged Land Lease. Anytime you operate a commercial endeavor over the waters of the State you have to give the State the proceeds. So besides maintaining the pier Santa Rosa County will have to pay a minimum of \$20,000 each year to the State of Florida. The Commissioners will establish the admission fees and the rules.

Chris Verlinde said January 5th through January 14th was a closed season for crabbing in order to remove derelict crab traps and together with DEP and FWC 128 crab traps were removed from Blackwater Bay and Catfish Basin.

Ms. Verlinde also mentioned that FDEP has been doing some work in East Bay and they have had problems with purchasing their equipment but finally have a 24 foot pontoon boat which they will hopefully dock in Escambia Bay so they will not have to launch everyday. They have put about 1,110 five gallon buckets of oyster shells at that site and have built seven reefs in the area. A field trip is being planned for spring and hopefully everyone will get out there to see it. FDEP is still waiting on the tractor.

Ms. Verlinde reported that monofilament recycling units are up in Shoreline Park South and Gulf Breeze High School students are monitoring them. Students at Navarre High School are monitoring two units at Navarre. Scout Pack 40, from Pace through Jonathan Brown, have communicated with her and plan to place and monitor units at Jim's Fish Camp, Simpson River, Archie Glover and possibly Carpenter's Park, Bagdad and Marquis Basin.

Mr. Marker stated the Boat Registration Fee Fund has a current balance of \$505,297.

## OTHER BUSINESS

None

## NEXT MEETING DATE

The next meeting is scheduled for March 2, 2010 at 5:00 p.m.

## ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting adjourned at 5:45 p.m.